

Message Text

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TAGS: PGOV, IV

SUBJ: IVORY COAST: PRESIDENT'S NEW YEARS'S MESSAGES

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET MADE HIS CUSTOMARY END OF THE YEAR SPEECHES TO THE PEOPLE OVER RADIO NEW YEAR'S EVE AND DURING THE NEW YEAR'S DAY RECEPTION TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS. THESE NEW YEAR MESSAGES CAN BEST BE SUMMARIZED AS A PLEA FOR PEACE AND UNDERSTANDING AMONG BROTHERS IN IVORY COAST AND BROTHERS AMONG ALL AFRICAN NATIONS. HE SPECIFICALLY CALLED FOR MORE DIALOGUE WITH SOUTH AFRICA OVER THE NAMIBIA QUESTION AND CONDEMNED VIOLENCE AS S MEANS TO ACHIEVE PEACE AMONG ALL AFRICANS. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET MADE HIS CUSTOMARY END OF THE YEAR SPEECH TOFGHE MATION OVER RADIO ON DECEMBER 31. IT WAS SHORTER THAN PREVIOUS YEARS. THIS IS MOST PROBABLY DUE TO THE FACT THAT NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONS WERE MOVED TO DECEMBER 7 FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS YEAR. ON THAT OCCASION HE SPOKE AT GREAT LENGTH ON PROGRESS MADE AND TO BE MADE IN IVORY COAST. THIS YEAR'S
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SPPECH, COUPLED WITH HIS REMARKS TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS AT THE

NEW YEAR'S DAY RECEPTION, CAN BE SUMMARIZED AS A PLEAS FOR PEACE AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN NATIONS, ESPECIALLY BLACK AND WHITE AFRICANS.

2. THE NEW YEAR'S EVE SPEECH WAS ONE CALLING FOR PEACE AMONG ALL MEN. HE BEGAN BY STATING HIS THANKS TO THE IVORIAN PEOPLE FOR PUTTING THEIR TRUST AND FAITH IN HIS ABILITIES TO GUIDE THE NATION. WHILE SEEING THE FUTILITY OF PREDICTING FUTURE ACTIONS, HE CALLED UPON ALL MEN, IN THEIR DEALINGS WITH THEIR FAMILIES AS WELL AS THE FAMILY OF NATIONS, TO BE AWARE OF THE NEEDS AND HOPES OF OTHER PEOPLE, THEREBY GAINING A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF OTHERS' MOTIVATIONS. HE DEPLORED WHAT HE TERMED "INSTITUTIONAL VIOLENCE." HE SAID THE HYPOCRISY OF THOSE WHO ADVOCATE VIOLENCE TO ACHIEVE PEACE HAS NO PLACE IN AFRICAN AFFAIRS. THE RESULTS OF VIOLENCE HAVE ONLY BEEN A DISTORTION OF THE FACTS AND VIOLENCE HAS NOT BEGOTTEN A MORE INTELLIGENT, REASONABLE SOLUTION TO AFRICA'S PROBLEMS. HE CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT THE GREAT POWERS, HAVING DEVOTED SO MUCH TIME, TECHNOLOGY AND RESOURCES TO THE ARMS RACE IN THE PURSUIT OF PEACE, COULD HAVE FOUND LASTING PEACE MUCH EASIER BY LISTENING TO THE VOICES OF THE MINORITIES AND TENDING TO THEIR NEEDS. HE ASKED EACH PERSON LISTENING TO PRACTICE UNDERSTANDING AND THE SPIRIT OF FRATERNALISM IN DEALINGS WITH HIS NEIGHBORS.

3. THE PRESIDENT IN RESPONSE TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS AT THE OFFICIAL NEW YEAR'S DAY RECEPTION GAVE THE EMPHASIS TO IVORIAN FOREIGN POLICY FOR 1975. IT IS ONE THAT CLEARLY STRESSES AFRICAN AFFAIRS. HE STARTED OUT BY DESCRIBING THE LONG AND FRUITFUL RELATIONSHIP WITH FRANCE OVER THE YEARS SINCE INDEPENDENCE. HE THEN QUICKLY MOVED TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER BY CALLING FOR A SOLUTION TO THE NAMIBIA AND SOUTH AFRICAN PROBLEMS THROUGH THE USE OF DIALOGUE. THE FINDING OF A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO SOUTHERN AFRICAN PROBLEMS WILL ONLY BE IN VAIN IF THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS AND AFRICAN NATIONS RESORT TO VIOLENCE TO ACHIEVE PEACE. IT IS NECESSARY TO ADOPT A SPIRIT OF FRATERNALISM TOWARDS ALL AFRICAN BROTHERS REGARDLESS OF RACE, AND BE WILLING TO RECONCILE DIFFERENCES THROUGH COMPROMISE BEFORE ANY LASTING PEACE CAN BE ACHIEVED.

4. THE JANUARY 3 EDITION OF FRATERNITE-MATIN PRINTED THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRESIDENT'S SPEECH FOR A SECOND STRAIGHT DAY. ALSO INCLUDED IN THAT EDITION WAS A SIGNED EDITORIAL (A RARE PRACTICE IN IVORY COAST) BY MINISTER OF INFORMATION DONA-FOLOGO. THE SUBSTANCE OF THE EDITORIAL WAS THE IVORIANS ALL TOO OFTEN FORGET THE WISDOM THAT PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET BESTOWS UPON THEM ON SUCH OCCASIONS. THEY SHOULD REFLECT UPON THE INJUSTICES OF WHICH THE PRESIDENT SPOKE. THE INJUSTICES ARAB COUNTRIES HAD BORNE UNTIL THE RECENT OIL CRISES; THE INJUSTICES BLACKS ARE NOW

SUFFERING IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. THE MAJOR POINTS OF THE EDITORIAL CLOSELY FOLLOWED THE OAU NONALIGNED STANCE THAT GOIC HAD BEEN ESPOUSING DURING 1974. EMOTIONALISM WAS MORE PREDOMINATE IN THIS EDITORIAL THAN IN THE SPEECHES OF THE PRESIDENT. UNDOUBTEDLY IT WAS AN ATTEMPT AT PRODDING THE BUREAUCRATS, AS WELL AS THE GENERAL POPULACE, INTO ACCEPTING THE NONALIGNED VIEW OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS.

5. COMMENT: FROM THE SENSE OF BOTH MESSAGES PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET IS ANXIOUS TO CONTINUE AND EXPAND, IF POSSIBLE, TALKS WITH SOUTH AFRICA IN A PURSUIT OF THE SOLUTIONS TO RACIAL PROBLEMS THAT EXIST. THE EMPHASIS IS CLEARLY ON THE MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT OF DIALOGUE IN DEALING WITH THE PROBLEMS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA AS WELL AS DEALING WITH THE INTERNAL PROBLEMS OF OF IVORY COAST DURING

1975. HIS DISPLEASURE WITH THE MALIAN-UPPER VOLTA BORDER DISPUTE SHONE THROUGH THE NEW YEAR'S EVE SPEECH EVEN THOUGH HE FAILED TO MENTION IT SPECIFICALLY. AT ONE POINT HIS TONE TOOK ON THAT OF A DISAPPOINTED FATHER LECTURING HIS SONS ABOUT FIGHTING AMONG THEMSELVES. CLEARLY THE PRESIDENT FEELS HIS POSITION DOMESTICALLY IS STRONGER THAN EVER. HE WOULD DERIVE NO GREATER PLEASURE THAN EXTENDING HIS SUCCESSES AT HOME IN 1974 TO SUCCESSES IN THE PURSUIT OF PEACE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA IN 1975. WE CAN LOOK FOR MOGCC DIALOGUE, CONDUCTED ALONG THE SAME LINES AS THE SEPTEMBER MEETINGS WITH HOUPHOUET, SENGHOR AND SOUTH AFRICANS, DURING 1975.
SMITH

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